

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
BIOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF WASHINGTON

THE FLORIDA PUMA.

BY OUTRAM BANGS.

In his book entitled 'Hunting and Fishing in Florida,' published in 1896, Mr. Charles B. Cory gave a brief description of the Florida Puma, and named it *Felis concolor floridana* (pp. 109-110). This name is untenable, both Desmarest* and Fischer† having used *Felis floridana*‡ for the Florida Lynx.

I therefore propose for the Florida Puma the name :

***Felis coryi* sp. nov.**

Type from the wilderness back of Sebastian, Florida. No. 7742, ♂ old adult, coll. of E. A. and O. Bangs. Collected Jan. 1, 1898, by F. R. Hunter.

General characters.—Size very large; feet very small; apparently no seasonal change in color; back ferruginous, finely lined with blackish; sides paler and more fawn color; skull like that of the North American pumas, and not at all like the skulls of Central and South American species.§

* Mammalogie, 1820, p. 225, species No. 350.

† Synopsis Mamm., 1829, p. 213.

‡ *Lynx floridanus* Raf., Am. Monthly Mag., 1817, p. 46. Based on the Lynx or Wildcat of Bartram.

§ See description of *Felis hippolestes* Merriam, Proc. Biol. Soc., Wash., vol. XI, July 15, 1897, p. 219. I have compared skulls of the Florida Puma with that of a fine adult ♀ taken at Santa Marta, Colombia, Feb. 15, 1898, by W. W. Brown, Jr., which I take to be true *Felis concolor* Linn. That of *F. concolor* is very small, with low, flat unswollen frontals; long, slender and only slightly decurved postorbital processes; differently shaped nasals; much less well developed sagittal crest, falling much farther back; small teeth; and inner cusp of carnassial not well developed. Roughly speaking, this skull resembles that of a large ocelot more than it does the skulls of North American pumas.

Color.—Type, ♂ old adult. Pelage very short and rather harsh. Top of head, upper surface of neck and back, and upper half of tail ferruginous, finely lined with blackish tipped hairs, with little bunches of white hairs scattered here and there; sides of neck and body, an ill-defined patch above and behind each shoulder, a band across under side of neck, and upper surfaces of limbs, paler and more inclined toward fawn color, many of the hairs with darker tips; under parts, including under surfaces of limbs and under side of tail, soiled whitish, except on middle of body, where the color is much darker and more hair brown; tail dusky toward end and nearly black at tips; ears black, grizzled around edges; hairs between pads of feet black; face rather dark and grizzled with a light spot above each eye; patch at base of whiskers black; whiskers mostly white, but in a few cases black.

Other specimens, though killed at different seasons of the year, differ but little from the type. A kitten three-fourths grown is similar, but has the upper surface marked with large, irregular dusky spots.

Cranial characters.—Skull large, showing all the characters of the North American pumas pointed out by Dr. Merriam. It is apparently narrower than the skull of *F. hipolestes* Merriam, with less widely spreading zygomatica. I have compared it with a skull of *F. oregonensis* Raf.,* from the vicinity of Tacoma, Wash., and find it slightly narrower, with less widely spread zygomatica; slightly narrower palatal extension; palate ending in more of a curve—less squarely. These differences are trifling, however, and may not be constant.

Measurements.—The following measurements of the type and an old ♀, No. 7743, killed at the same time and place, were taken by F. R. Hunter from the animals in the flesh. Type, ♂ old ad.: whole length, 6 ft. 9 in.; fore leg, 2 ft. 8 in.; hind leg, 2 ft. 8 in.; girth of chest, 2 ft. 7 in.; of waist, 2 ft. 8 in.; of neck, 22½ in. No. 7743, ♀ old ad.: whole length, 6 ft. 3½ in.; fore leg, 2 ft. 5 in.; hind leg, 2 ft. 6 in.; girth of chest, 2 ft. 2 in.; of waist, 2 ft.; of neck, 21½ in.

Total length reduced to millimeters and the tails and hind feet measured by me from the skins are as follows: Type, total length, 2057.4; tail, without hairs, 760; hind foot, 280. No. 7743: total length, 1917.7; tail, without hairs, 670; hind foot, 271. No. 6992, very old male topotype, unmeasured, is even larger and has a larger skull.

Skull.—Type, basal length, 171; occipitonasal length, 194; zygomatic width, 135; palatal length (from end of pterygoid process to back of middle incisors), 110.4; postpalatal length, 91; width across postorbital processes, 75.; interorbital width, 40.8.

No. 5489, old adult ♀ topotype: basal length, 157.4; occipitonasal length, 175; zygomatic width, 126; palatal length, 102; postpalatal length, 84; width across postorbital processes, 76.6; interorbital width, 40.

Remarks.—According to all the information I have been able to glean, the Florida Puma is now restricted to peninsular Florida and can no longer

* Stone, Science, N. S., Jan. 6, 1899, pp. 34–35.

intergrade with any other form, and it is doubtful if it ever did.* It must, therefore, be given full specific rank.

Compared with true *F. concolor* Linn., *F. coryi* is a huge Puma, and is indeed but little smaller than the giant of the Rocky Mountains, *F. hipolestes* Merriam. Its long limbs, small feet, and rich ferruginous color are the best characters by which to distinguish it from other North American pumas. It needs no comparison with the small pumas of northern South America or of Central America.

The Bangs collection now contains six specimens of *F. coryi* (skins and skulls complete), all taken by F. R. Hunter in the same general region of Florida, namely, the great wilderness back of Sebastian, in Brevard and Osceola counties. Mr. Hunter writes that three of these pumas, the type an old female and the young female, were all killed together on New Year's day, 1898.

* Mr. F. W. True, in his monograph on the Puma, under the head of Virginia, says: "Mr. Hallock makes the very interesting statement that the Puma is found in the Dismal Swamp. I find no other reference to its occurrence in the low coast lands of the South Atlantic States except in Florida" (p. 599).